

1- X RARE OR UNUSUAL RECORD

NEW STATE RECORD

☒ ACCEPTED

REJECTED

11/7/76

Species: BENDIRE'S THRASHER

Toxostoma bendirei

(Vernacular Name)

(Scientific Name-use binomial)

Date(s): June 9, 1970

Time Bird Seen: 2 P. M.

to 2:30 P. M.

Locality: E₂ Sec. 25, T27S, R59W, 6th Principal Meridian

Nearest Town: 14 miles SW of Timpas, Colorado

County: Otero

Other observers who independently identified this bird:

NAME _____

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

None

Optical Equipment: 8x40 Bushnell CF binoculars. 30X Balscope Sr. telescope.

If photographed, type of equipment used: Nest. Miranda 35mm. 50mm lens w/UV filter.

Light Conditions: Kodachrome X film. f:8 1/60 16 inches. Bright sunshine.

Distance from bird (how measured): 75 feet. Estimated.

Number of Birds Seen: 1 Sex: ? Plumage: Breeding

Describe the bird's overall behavior and demeanor: Bird entered Rocky Mountain Juniper bush. Flushed bird and discovered nest containing 5 eggs (2 photos attached). Bird flew to another juniper about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away and watched nervously until I withdrew. From a distance I watched the bird return to the nest which was located 53 feet above the ground. Later I drove to within 75 feet of the nest and using the truck as a blind, watched the bird for about 15 minutes through the telescope. Bird was on the nest and in the top of the bush in good light.

Describe in great detail the bird's size, overall shape, plumage and color-pattern. Include details on shape of bill, wings and tail. Give particular emphasis to the marks you used to identify the bird. Reference to its resemblance in field guide descriptions is not enough. Describe what you actually saw in the field: About 10 inches long, slender body, long tail, gray head, back and tail. No wing bars or marking in tail. Faintly spotted breast, light gray belly. Bill about same length as head, lower mandible straight and upper mandible slightly curved. Eyes yellow.

An identical, current year's nest was found about 75 feet south of the nest containing eggs. It was empty and showed no signs of disturbance or use.

(OVER)

Describe the bird's song or call, if heard, including method of delivery, i.e., from perch, in flight, etc: None

Describe the habitat in which you observed this bird: Shortgrass Plains
Bouteloua gracilis - Euchloe dactyloides with scattered Juniperus scopulorum and Opuntia arborescens.

How were similarly appearing species eliminated? Curve-billed Thrasher which has a longer, curved bill and orange eyes.

Prior experience with this and similarly appearing species: Several years of observations of both species in Arizona and New Mexico

Books, illustrations and advice consulted and how did these influence this documentation?

None

This report was written from notes made during X after ___ observation; from memory ___

PRINT NAME: Robert F. Buttery SIGNATURE: Robert F. Buttery DATE: Dec. 18, 1975
Street Address: 970 S. Arbutus St. Town and State: Lakewood, Colorado ZIP: 80228

Return to: JACK REDDALL - 4450 South Alton Street, Englewood, Colorado 80110

BENDIRE'S THRASHER NESTING IN COLORADO

Robert F. Buttery
Regional Office, U.S. Forest Service
Federal Center, Bldg. 85
Denver, Colorado 80225

On June 9, 1970, while doing field work on the Comanche National Grassland about 14 miles southwest of Timpas (sw of La Junta), Otero County, Colorado (E 1/2 Sec. 25, T27S, R59W, 6th Principal Meridian), I saw what I thought was a Curve-billed Thrasher (Toxostoma curvirostre) fly into a Rocky Mountain juniper tree about 100 yards from where I was working. When I later examined the tree, the bird flushed and I discovered a nest, built of Russian thistle, juniper twigs and grass, located 5 1/2 feet above the ground. I photographed the nest which contained five greenish, spotted eggs. Using a pickup truck as a blind and a 30x Balscope, I was able to observe the bird for about 15 minutes at a distance of about 75 feet. To my surprise the bird had a straight bill and yellow eye, was grayish brown above and had a faintly spotted breast. These markings and the lack of distinct wing bars, white-tipped outer tail feathers, and orange eye convinced me that the bird was not a Curve-billed Thrasher but a Bendire's Thrasher (Toxostoma bendirei), which I had not seen since 1967 in Arizona. An identical, current year's nest was found about 75 feet south of this nest. It was empty and showed no sign of disturbance or use.

Bailey and Niedrach, Pictorial Checklist of Colorado Birds, 1967 list only one previous record (female collected in El Paso County on May 3, 1932), this being the second state record and the first nesting record for Colorado.